

THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, APRIL 5, 1963

## Genius of the Atom Bomb

Julius Robert Oppenheimer

DR. J. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER, A GENIUS IN physics, was 38 years old when he was called from his university classes to lead the Manhattan project that developed the atomic bomb and brought World War II to an end. To friends and associates he was known as "Oppie"

Man during the hectic days when he was administrator, scientist and diplomat of the

super-secret bomb project.

Dr. Oppenheimer wore a brown pork-pie hat in his travels between groups of scientists working on the project. Frequently the hat was hung in laboratories and offices as a symbol that he was at hand.

On Aug. 6, 1945, when the first uranium bomb pulverized Hiroshima, the War Department announced that Dr. Oppenheimer "is to be credited with achieving the implementation of atomic energy for military purposes."

### Troubled by Success

Dr. Oppenheimer was among the many scientists troubled by this enormous accomplishment that had loosed such an awesome force upon mankind. Not long ago he remarked that scientists had come, because of this experience, to know sin.

Yesterday it was disclosed that Dr. Oppenheimer, now director of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, N.J., will receive the Fermi Award, the highest honor conferred by the Atomic Energy Commission.

Dr. Oppenheimer rarely makes public appearances. At scientific meetings he speaks, with diffidence and modesty, in a low voice that does not carry far. His listeners have to strain to hear his words, which are usually illuminating.

Dr. Oppenheimer, a thin man, is 6 feet tall and has close-cropped hair. He chain-smokes cigarettes.

### A Touch of the Poet

In his writing he is almost a poet, beautifully fluent. He moves gracefully. He is a scholar and well versed in eight languages.

J. Robert Oppenheimer was born in New York on April 22, 1904. His father was a well-to-do textile importer, who had come to this country from Germany at the age of 17. His mother was a Baltimore artist.

At the age of 11 he was elected to the New York Mineralogical Society. He attended Ethical Culture School here. In three years he completed a Harvard College course summa cum laude. He studied at Cambridge University in England.

At Goettingen in Germany he earned his doctorate in 1927 with a thesis on quantum mechanics. It was finished three weeks after he had enrolled. In 1929, he joined the physics faculties of the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena and the University of California in Berkeley.

His interests ranged far and wide. He was a



Associated Press

Physics with poetic flair

Sophocles early. At Harvard he found Dante and pored over French literature. The scope of his erudition is enormous. He knows art and he knows music. He was an enormously popular teacher with a wide influence on his students.

He came by his interests in physics early.

Once, it is recalled, he made an infrequent trip to the playground as a third or fourth grader. A child threw a ball out of the playground and the director criticized throw. But young Robert calculated the force with which the ball struck the sidewalk and demonstrated that it could not have hurt anyone.

### A Scholar's 'Paradise'

Harvard herecalls as an intellectual paradise.

"I loved it," he said later. "I almost came alive. I took more courses than I was supposed to, lived in the stacks, just raided the place intellectually."

In his teaching days in California, Dr. Oppenheimer stuck to the academic life. He recalls that he had no radio, no telephone, and he never read a newspaper or a current magazine. His friends were faculty people from Pasadena and Berkeley—scientists, classicists and artists.

"I was interested in man and his experience," Dr. Oppenheimer said later. "I was deeply interested in my science, but I had no understanding of the relations of man to his society."

In 1940 he married Katherine Puening. The Oppenheimers had two children,

# E.C. PRIZE GOING TO OPPENHEIMER

Fermi Award Signals Move to Annul Security Ban

By JOHN W. FINNEY  
Special to The New York Times  
WASHINGTON, April 4. Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer, the unjustly denigrated physicist who was declared a security risk by the Atomic Energy Commission in 1954, has been chosen to receive the highest honor of the nation—the commission chairman, R. McCarthy.

The decision to present Dr. Oppenheimer with the \$50,000, "Fermi Award for 1963" is expected to be announced by the White House tomorrow. Officially, Dr. Oppenheimer will receive the award for his contributions to the development of nuclear energy. These include his work in developing the atomic bomb during World War II and in promoting the military and peaceful uses of the atom after the war.

Within the Administration, however, the award is intended as a symbolic action to "clear the name" of the scientist who is the center of a bitter political controversy. It is the last of a series of actions taken by the Administration during the past few years to restore his public honor. Particularly within the Kennedy Administration, there was reaction to Dr. Oppenheimer's security risk status to several years of his activities during the war. It is the Kennedy and Kennedy groups have sought for a few years to restore his public honor.

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Continued on Page 26, Column 3

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As a result, Loren K. Olson, then general counsel of the commission, made a detailed review of the case. As he recalled recently, Mr. Olson concluded that it was "a messy record from a legal standpoint, that the charges kept shifting at each level of the proceedings, that the evidence was stale and consisted of information that was 12 years old and was known when a security clearance was granted during World War II and that it was a punitive, personal abuse of the judicial system."

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"data" pending a security review. A three-man panel, headed by Gordon Gray, then president of the University of North Carolina, was set up to review the charges. Dr. Oppenheimer had been accused of associating with Communists before and during World War II, of hiring Communists and ex-Communists at the Los Alamos Laboratory, of aiding and contributing to Communist causes and of actively opposing the hydrogen bomb project after it had been ordered by President Truman.

The Gray panel announced on June 1 that it had found Dr. Oppenheimer to be "a loyal citizen" but had recommended, by a 2-to-1 vote against reinstating his security clearance as a consultant to the commission.

Approval By A.E.C. The panel's recommendation was upheld later that month by the commission, which announced on June 29 that it had voted 4 to 1, against granting security clearance to Dr. Oppenheimer.

In the majority were Lewis L. Strauss, the commission chairman, Eugene M. Zuckert, now Secretary of the Air Force, Joseph Campbell, now Comptroller General, and the late Thomas E. Murray. The lone dissenter was Dr. Henry D. Smyth, now the United States representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The majority opinion, signed by Messrs. Strauss, Zuckert and Campbell, held that Dr. Oppenheimer was a security risk on the basis of "fundamental defects in his character" and because "his associations with persons known to him to be Communists have extended far beyond the tolerable limits of prudence and self-restraint."

In a separate opinion, Mr. Murray went beyond the majority and questioned Dr. Oppenheimer's loyalty. In his dissent, Dr. Smyth maintained that Dr. Oppenheimer's loyalty and trustworthiness emerge clearly from his record of Government service and that there was no reason to believe that he "has ever divulged any secret information."

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Appointment Suggested Mr. Olson recommended appointing Dr. Oppenheimer as a consultant on a classified project. That, he pointed out, would require a new security investigation. Such a report would be laid before the commission and the commission would grant clearance and "that's all there would be to it."

Nothing positive resulted from this commission discussion. Action seemingly was put off on the common agreement that the question went beyond the commission's scope.

Behind the scenes, however, the scientist members of the commission continued to discuss action to vindicate Dr. Oppenheimer.

There were also continuing efforts by outside groups. Joseph Volpe, for example, a Washington lawyer and general counsel of the commission from 1948 to 1961, urged Administration officials and members of the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy to act. Mr. Volpe had worked with Dr. Oppenheimer on the Manhattan Project.

Some influential members of the Congressional Committee made clear that they were not opposed to reopening the Oppenheimer case but urged that action be deferred until after the election.

Invited to White House As a "trial balloon" to test public reaction, the Administration invited Dr. Oppenheimer to a White House dinner on April 23, 1962, that honored forty nine Nobel Prize winners. The invitation was regarded by some White House officials as the first step in the "rehabilitation" of Dr. Oppenheimer.

During the dinner, Dr. Seaborg was understood to have approached Dr. Oppenheimer and asked whether he would, and Dr. Leland J. Haworth—like another hearing, Dr. Oppenheimer was reported to have members Mr. Olson and John S. Graham.

The Seaborg question and the Oppenheimer response pointed out the basic problem confronting Administration officials—that of finding a way to "clear" Dr. Oppenheimer without reopening the hearings and subjecting him to another round of interrogation.

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One commissioner, not identified, was reported to have suggested that the commission agree that in the absence of new evidence it could not reopen the case. From the back row, Mr. Maiten was reported to have objected that the commission could not take such a position since, in effect, it would be endorsing the position taken during the Eisenhower Administration.

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## Oppenheimer Selected To Get Fermi Award

By Howard Simon  
Staff Reporter

J. Robert Oppenheimer, controversial atomic scientist, has been selected to receive the \$50,000 Fermi Award—the Atomic Energy Commission's highest honor, it was learned last night.

Oppenheimer, who lost the right to do secret work for the Government in a celebrated security case in 1954, was picked unanimously for the award by the AEC's 9-member General Advisory Committee, a group of eminent American scientists.

The award was endorsed, again unanimously, by the present Atomic Energy Commission and was approved by President Kennedy.

The Fermi award, which is clearance to Oppenheimer by given for "especially meritorious contribution to the development, use or control of atomic energy," goes to Oppenheimer for his contributions, to theoretical nuclear physics and for his leadership in developing both the atomic bomb and peaceful applications of atomic energy.

Oppenheimer's selection will be viewed by many as representing a desire by the present Administration to redress what some consider a previous wrong.

It also has led to speculation that Oppenheimer might be requested to do secret work for the Government, which would automatically make him a candidate for new security clearance. The award itself does not reinstate Oppenheimer's security clearance.

The wartime scientific director of the Nation's Manhattan Project for building the first atomic bomb lost his clearance after a lengthy and acrimonious hearing to determine whether he was a security risk.

Essentially Oppenheimer's judgment as regards security was called into question because of his association with French scientist Haakon

Chevalier, a Communist. But questions were raised about his opposition to the development of the hydrogen bomb and about his loyalty.

The debate resulted in the scientific community and the world not having been totally healed.

The AEC denied security clearance to Oppenheimer by a 4 to 1 vote in 1954. Three of the four AEC commissioners — Chairman Lewis L. Strauss, Eugene M. Zuckert and Joseph Kampbell — based their decision on the conclusion that Oppenheimer had shown "fundamental defects" of character and "wilful disregard" of security obligations. The fourth majority member was Commissioner Thomas F. Murray.

Comptroller Henry D. Smyth voted for Oppenheimer, declaring that "he is completely loyal."

The Oppenheimer decision landed in the AEC's lap in 1954 after President Eisenhower had suspended Oppenheimer's clearance pending review of charges against the scientist. A special three-member board concluded unanimously in May, 1954, that Oppenheimer was a loyal citizen but it voted 2 to 1 against restoring his security clearance. The AEC's decision followed in June.

Informal sources yesterday said that Strauss, along with other former AEC chairmen and members of the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, had been informed of the decision to give "Opie," as he is known in the scientific community, the award.

The first hint that the Administration might approve honoring Oppenheimer came last year when he was invited to a dinner at the White House for Nobel Prize winners.

Oppenheimer is not a Nobel Prize winner.

Since 1947 he has been director of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton University.

Previous winners of the award, named for the late Enrico Fermi, pioneer atomic scientist, include John von Neuman, E. O. Lawrence, Eugene Wigner, Glenn T. Seaborg, present chairman of the AEC, Hans Bethe and Edward Teller.

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Standard Form 63  
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63-104

MEMORANDUM OF CALL

Date <i>13 May</i>	Time
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TO—

*Drene*

☐ YOU WERE CALLED BY—

☒ YOU WERE VISITED BY—

*Burtha*

TELEPHONE:	Number or code	Extension
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☐ PLEASE CALL

☐ WAITING TO SEE YOU

☐ WILL CALL AGAIN

☐ WISHES AN APPOINTMENT

☐ RETURNING YOUR CALL

☐ IS REFERRED TO YOU BY:

LEFT THIS MESSAGE:

*she talked to  
Lita this morning and  
she confirmed the fact  
that the DCT ~~was~~ not  
going to nominate anyone for  
the House committee*

Received By:

*f. h. c.*

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